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Research Project

The Potential for Political Violence in Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand:

Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model

Progress Report No. 4

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3.5(c)

April 1975

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Progress Report No. 4 April 1975

The Potential for Political Violence in Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand: Report on a Quantitative Analytical Model

This is the fourth in a series of reports on the testing of an analytical model of political violence adapted from Ted Robert Gurr's frustration-aggression theory (*Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, 1970). The Gurr theory is based on the proposition that political violence is the product of group frustrations reinforced by the belief that violence is justified and by the capability to turn the resulting politicized anger into collective aggression. The form of the ensuing violence—*turmoil* (riots or demonstrations), *insurgency* (terrorist acts or small-scale guerrilla operations), *conspiracy* (attempted coups), or *internal war* (large-scale revolutionary actions or civil war)—will depend upon the kinds of relationships which are found to exist among various types of groups in the country under examination. A complete description of the theory and of the procedures devised to operationalize it as an analytical tool is contained in an earlier OPR report of an experimental, *ex post facto* test of the model in the Chilean situation of mid-1973 (OPR 502, Revised, November 1974).

The purpose of this second phase of the project is to test the value of the Gurr model as a technique for assessing the nature and potential for political violence in societies of varying stages of development and with quite different cultural heritages and political institutions. The three countries chosen—Argentina, Ethiopia, and Thailand—seem to meet our requirements: Each represents a different stage of development in a distinct geographic area, and each is confronted with domestic unrest or political conflict.

For each of the three countries, a panel of five CIA analysts assigns numerical evaluations at regular intervals to the model's key variables—relative deprivation or collective frustration, belief in the justification for violence, coercive force, and institutional support. The evaluations are made for each group or "actor" which, in the panel's judgment, represents a significant political force in the country. The country's actors are also assessed in terms of their identification with four basic actor-categories: Pro-regime, mass-oriented (PR-MO); pro-regime, elite-oriented (PR-EO); anti-regime, mass-oriented (AR-MO); and anti-regime, elite-oriented (AR-EO). At each point of assessment during the test period, the panel's evaluations are combined statistically, using computerized procedures devised in the Office of Political Research, to produce overall evaluations of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV) and of the conditions conducive to particular types of violence in the country under observation. The three panels' evaluations are made on a monthly schedule, and the entire test series is expected to run until mid-1975.

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NOTE: Comments or questions on this project will be welcomed by its author [redacted] Office of Political Research, code 143, ext. 4091.

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The summary below presents the principal findings from the fifth set of assessments made by the country panels in mid-April 1975. The graphs on succeeding pages display trends based on the five sets of assessments made to date. Subsequent monthly progress reports, based in each case on mid-month evaluations, will indicate trend changes in the panels' scoring patterns. In this way, the model's projections of the potential and form of political violence can be tested against actual developments in each country during the test period.

Summary of Principal Findings

(NOTE: The data cited below and in the following graphs are keyed to each country's Potential for Political Violence or PPV, as reflected by the median PPV score of each five-member country panel. *The figures should not be regarded as representing either probabilities or absolute quantities; they should be interpreted merely as indicating relative status or strength, compared to other variables in the model assessed by the same country panel or to corresponding variables assessed by the other two country panels.*)

General:

1. In mid-April, assessments of all three country panels produced shifts in trends which contrasted sharply with previous months. For the first time since mid-January, the potential for political violence in Ethiopia decreased, though it remained the highest of the three countries. At the same time, the potential in both Argentina and Thailand jumped sharply, ending downward trends in those two countries over the past two months. At mid-April, Thailand ranked somewhat below Ethiopia in potential for political violence, with Argentina now a distant third.

2. Within the limits of Argentina's relatively lower potential, the conditions for the four basic types of political violence were roughly equal. In contrast, conditions in Ethiopia continued to show a strong tendency toward internal war and conspiracy, with the emphasis shifting from the former to the latter. In Thailand, within the limits of its considerably enlarged potential, the conditions for turmoil clearly outweighed those for insurgency, conspiracy, and internal war.

3. In Ethiopia, anti-regime actors, particularly anti-regime elite groups, continued to display the greatest potential for political violence. In the other two countries, particularly in Thailand, anti-regime mass actors appeared to have the strongest potential.

4. While in Ethiopia politicized frustration subsided somewhat as a motivating force for violence, it rose markedly in both Argentina and Thailand. The rise in Thai politicized frustration was particularly marked, reaching a level 60 percent above that of mid-March. Though Thailand displayed a perceptible increase in institutional support and coercive force needed to turn politicized frustration into violence, the capability to incite actual political violence remained relatively stable in the three countries. In mid-April, Thailand displayed the largest amount of institutional support and coercive force, Argentina the least.

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5. The range of variation in the assessments of the Argentine and Ethiopian panels remained relatively constant in the March-April period, while that for the Thai panel increased markedly. At mid-April, the range of variation was approximately the same for all three panels.

Argentina:

The potential for political violence in Argentina showed a marked increase in the March-April period (a jump from 37 to 48 in median PPV score). Within the limits of that increased potential, conditions favorable to turmoil (12), conspiracy (12), and internal war (14) all increased during the period. Increases in PPV were evident among all types of actor groups, but the increase for anti-regime mass actors was the largest (a gain of 6 to 15). Politicized frustration widened during the period (an increase from 21 to 30), while the capability to channel that frustration into actual political violence remained relatively unchanged (a gain of 1 to a PPV score of 9 for both coercive force and institutional support). The range of variation in assessments among members of the Argentine panel remained constant (a range of 43 around a median PPV score of 37 in March, compared to a range of 42 around a median PPV score of 48 in April). The pattern of variation, however, showed a continuing divergence between analysts from OPR and DDO at the low end of the scale (Analyst A from OPR at 23, Analyst B from DDO at 16) and those from CRS, OER, and OCI bunched at a considerably higher point (Analyst C from CRS at 52, Analyst D from OER at 58, and Analyst E from OCI at 48).

Ethiopia:

The potential for political violence in Ethiopia showed a slight decline from March (from 78 to 73 in median PPV score), reversing the uptrend in PPV over the past two months. While the conditions for turmoil and internal war declined (a decrease from 16 to 13 for turmoil, a drop from 24 to 19 for internal war), the conditions for insurgency remained the same (at 18), and those for conspiracy increased (from 20 to 23). While in March conditions seemed most favorable to internal war, conditions in April appeared most conducive to conspiracy. The potential for violence among the four types of actors remained relatively unchanged; anti-regime mass and elite actors (at 20 and 27, respectively) continued to hold a strong edge in PPV over pro-regime mass and elite actors (9 and 17, respectively). Politicized frustration in the country declined slightly in the March-April period (from 56 to 52), while the capability to turn that frustration into actual political violence remained stable (10 for coercive force, 11 for institutional support). The range of variation among Ethiopian panel members remained constant during the period (40 around a median PPV score of 78 in March, 41 around a median PPV score of 73 in April).

Thailand:

In the March-April period the potential for political violence in Thailand jumped sharply (from a median PPV score of 44 in March to one of 67 in April). This is the largest monthly increase recorded for any of the three countries since the present series of assessments began. Of the conditions conducive to particular types of violence, those for turmoil showed the largest increase (from

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17 to 30), the conditions for internal war and insurgency also grew (from 9 to 17 for internal war, from 13 to 16 for insurgency), while those for conspiracy remained relatively low and stable (an increase from 5 to 6). The greatest increase in PPV was seen among anti-regime mass actors (an increase from 13 to 28); smaller increases were recorded for anti-regime elite actors (8 to 10), pro-regime mass actors (7 to 11), and pro-regime elite actors (16 to 18). Fueling the relatively large increase in PPV, politicized frustration rose sharply in the period (from 24 to 40), while the capability required to transform that frustration into actual political violence increased moderately (from 9 to 14 for coercive force, from 11 to 13 for institutional support). Variation in assessments among Thai panel members increased during the period (from a range of 34 around a median PPV score of 44 in March to a range of 41 around a median PPV score of 67 in April).

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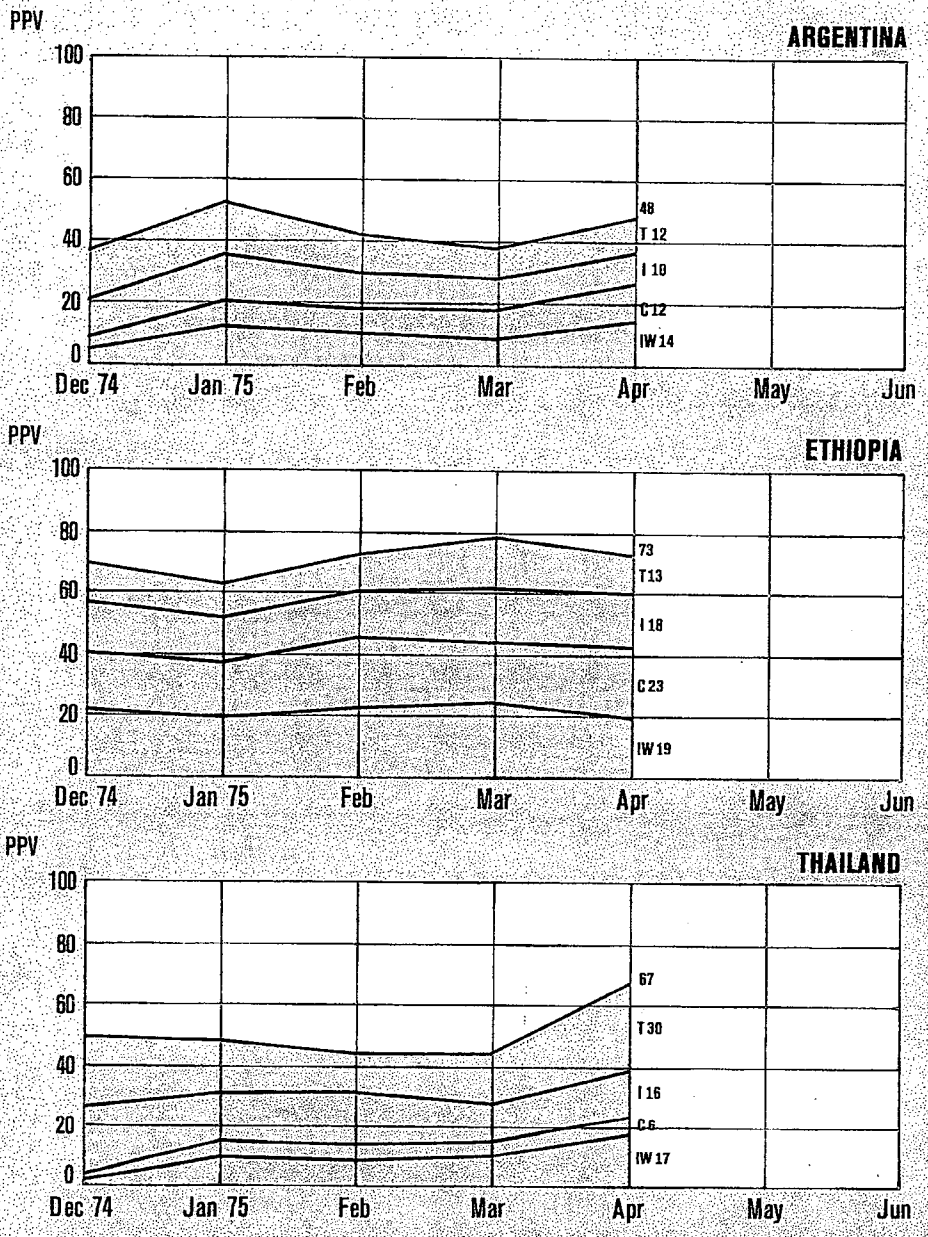
Conditions Conducive to Particular Types of Political Violence



Shaded areas represent, within the limits of each country's potential for political violence (PPV), the degree to which that country panel's median scores on key variables fulfill the conditions hypothesized by the Gurr theory as conducive to each type of political violence.

T - Turmoil
I - Insurgency
C - Conspiracy
IW - Internal War

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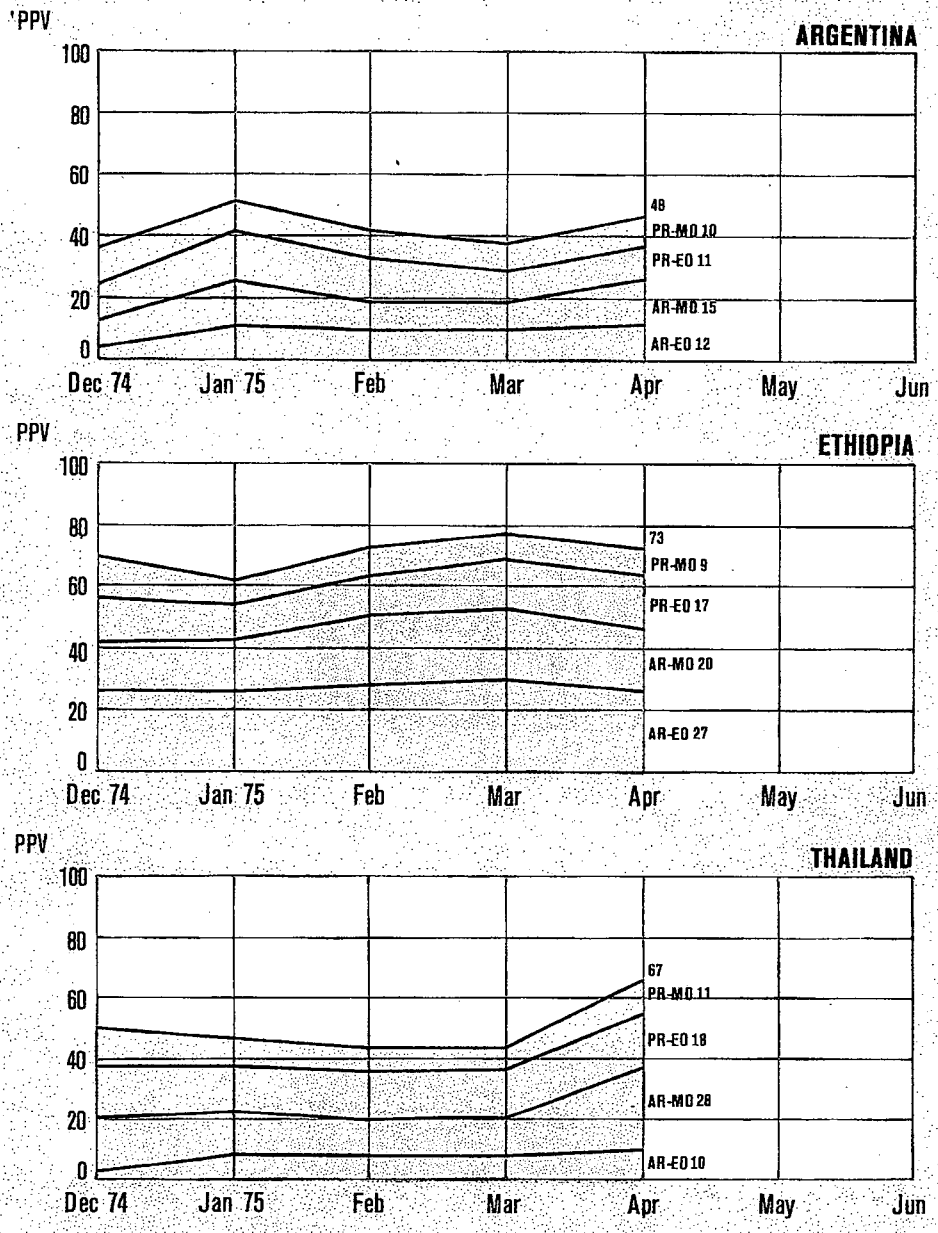
The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) for Each Type of Actor



Shaded areas represent each country panel's median scores for PPV for each actor category.

PR-MO-Pro-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
PR-EO- Pro-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors
AR-MO-Anti-Regime, Mass-Oriented Actors
AR-EO- Anti-Regime, Elite-Oriented Actors

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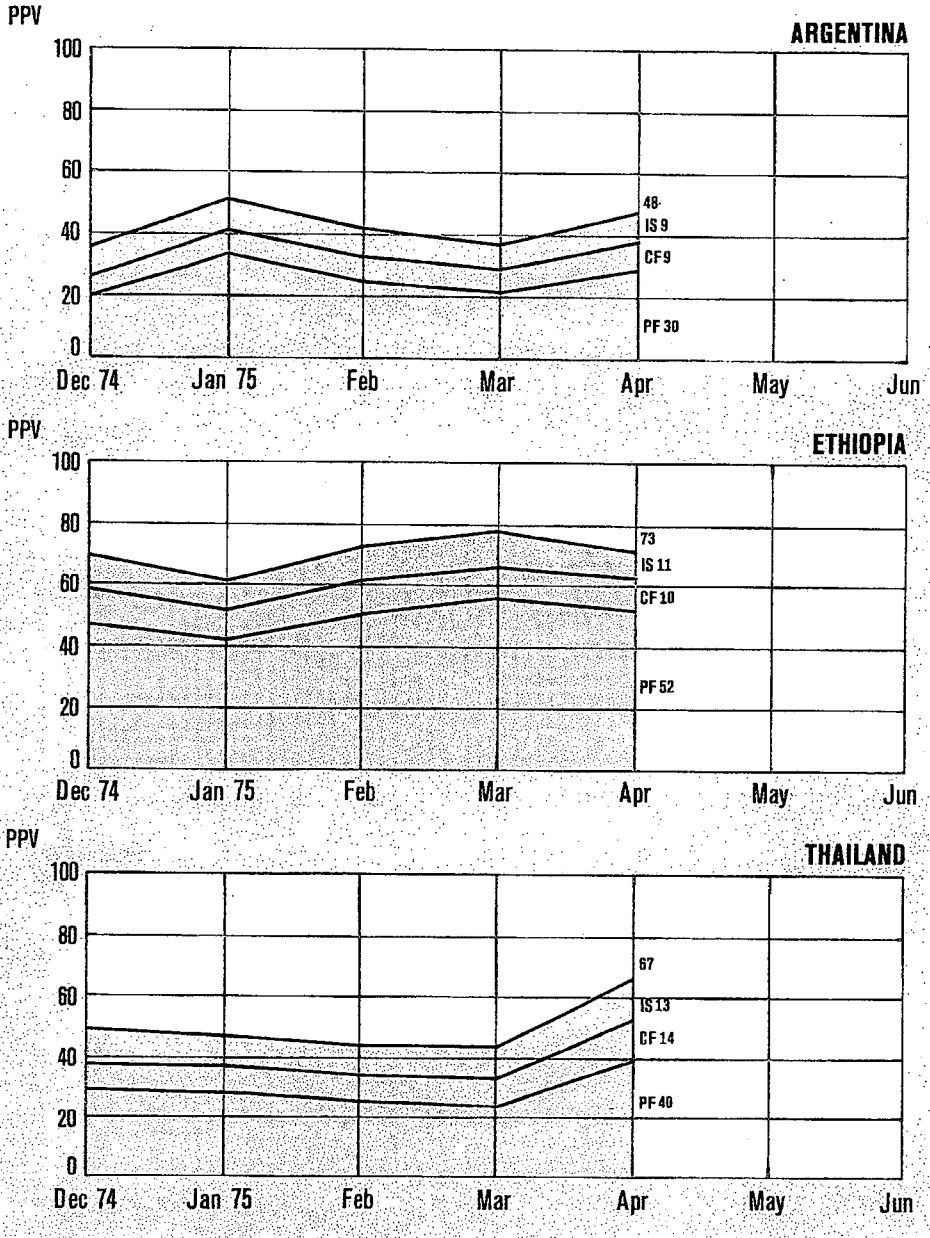
The Potential for Political Violence (PPV) in Terms of Key Variables in the Gurr Model



Shaded areas represent sums of each country panel's median scores for each key variable for all actor categories.

IS - Institutional Support
CF - Coercive Force
PF - Politicized Frustration (relative deprivation x justification for violence)

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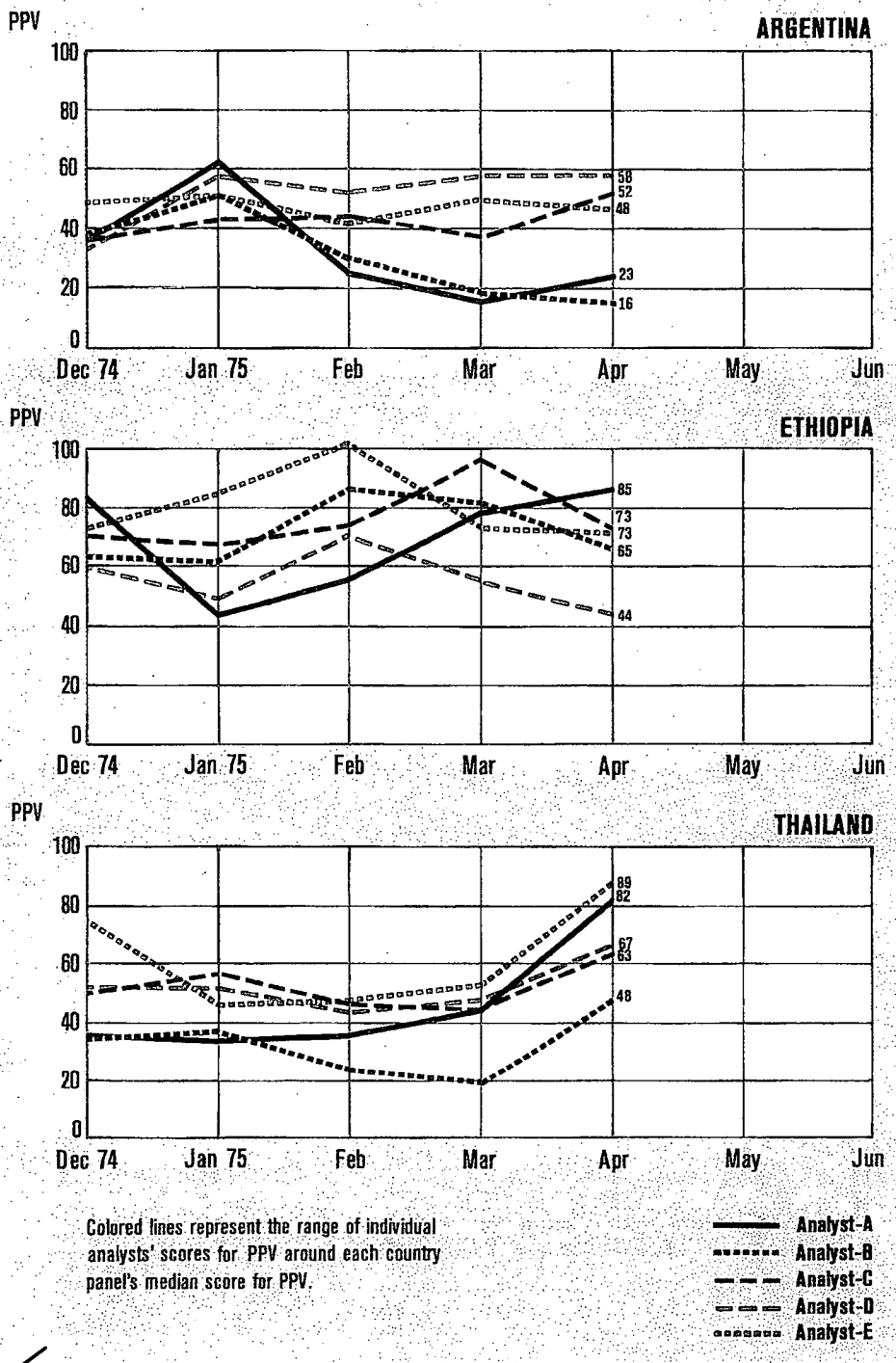
Individual Analysts' Assessments of the Potential for Political Violence (PPV)



Colored lines represent the range of individual analysts' scores for PPV around each country panel's median score for PPV.

Analyst-A
Analyst-B
Analyst-C
Analyst-D
Analyst-E

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